

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSC-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05

NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 /049 W

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2538

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT BC

SUBJ: BOTSWANA CABINET SHUFFLE

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. GOB UNEXPECTEDLY ANNOUNCED JUNE 15 AN EXCHANGE OF POSITIONS WITHIN THE CABINET. THE PRESENT MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, MR E.S. MASISI, WILL BECOME MINISTER OF HEALTH; MR L.M. SERETSE, WHO NOW IS MINISTER OF HEALTH, WILL BE APPOINTED MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. THESE CHANGES WILL BE EFFECTIVE JULY 1.

2. OTHER CHANGES EFFECTIVE AUG 1 INCLUDE SHIFT OF MR DAVID FINLAY FROM PERMANENT SECRETARY IN MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO PERMSEC SLOT IN AGRICULTURE. MR K.M. MASOGO WILL REPLACE FINLAY AS ACTING PERMSEC IN MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. END UNCLASSIFIED

3. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE COMMENT: TRANSFER OF FINALLY TO PERSEC FOR AGRICULTURE PLACES ONE OF GOB'S BEST ADMINISTRATORS IN POSITION TO TRY HIS HAND AT SOLVING HOST OF SERIOUS AND POLITICALLY SENSITIVE PROBLEMS INCLUDING IMPLEMENTATION OF TRIBAL GRAZING LANDS POLICY, DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL ARABLE LANDS
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POLICY, PERSISTENT ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS AT BOTSWANA MEAT COMMISSION, AND HOOF AND MOUTH OUTBREAK. ON THE OTHER HAND, OUTGOING MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE MASISI IS GENERALLY REGARDED AS MORE COMPETENT AND ENERGETIC THAN HIS DESIGNATED REPLACEMENT. MASISI, WHO IS WIDELY BELIEVED TO HAVE AMBITIONS FOR HIGHER POLITICAL OFFICE, MAY HAVE OPTED FOR LESS DEMANDING AND POLITICALLY SAFER HEALTH PORTFOLIO AFTER

STRUGGLING WITH MIXED RESULTS AT AGRICULTURE. PRESIDENT KHAMA
MAY ALSO HAVE CONCLUDED THAT MASISI, WHO IS WELL KNOWN AS
PROSPEROUS CATTLE RANCHER, WAS POLITICAGLY VULNERABLE AS
ADMINISTRATOR OF GOB AGRICULTURAL POLICIES WHICH MANY BATSWANA
BELIEVE FAVOR LARGE SCALE CATTLE OWNERS. IN ANY EVENT,
ADMINISTRATIVE ABILITY OF SERETSE/FINLAY TEAM WILL BE SEVERELY
TESTED AS GOB ATTEMPTSSTO MEET ITS VERY AMBITIOUS GOAL OF
SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FOOD BY 1985.
NORLAND

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NNN

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